Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for determining a threshold value (O_{max}, O_{min}, O_{TR}) serving to limit an output signal of a processing unit into which an input signal has been fed, characterized in that a level of the input signal is determined and that the threshold value (O_{max}, O_{min}, O_{TR}) is controlled as a function of the level of the input signal, the threshold value (O_{max}, O_{min}, O_{TR}) being controlled independently of the output signal.

Claim 2 (currently amended): ~~The~~ A method ~~as in claim 1~~ for determining a threshold value (O_{max}, O_{min}, O_{TR}) serving to limit an output signal of a processing unit into which an input signal has been fed, characterized in that a level of the input signal is determined and that the threshold value (O_{max}, O_{min}, O_{TR}) is controlled as a function of the level of the input signal, wherein from the said level a mean level (I) is derived on the basis of which the threshold value (O_{max}, O_{min}, O_{TR}) is ~~set~~ controlled.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The method as in claim 2, wherein the threshold value (O_{TR}) is ~~set~~ controlled by a

differential amount (TR_{max}) above the mean level (I) of the input signal.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The method as in claim 2, wherein the mean level (I) is derived from the input signal s(t) along the following formula:

$$I = \frac{1}{T} \times \int_{o}^{T} |s(t)| \times dt$$

whereby an averaging function is performed over a time interval T.

Claim 5 (currently amended): ~~The~~ A method ~~as in claim 1, wherein~~ for determining a maximum threshold value (O_{max}) ~~is established~~ serving to limit an output signal of a processing unit into which an input signal has been fed, characterized in that a level of the input signal is determined and that the threshold value (O_{max}) is controlled as a function of the level of the input signal.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The method as in claim 5, wherein the maximum threshold value (O_{max}) is so selected as to be equal to an upper comfort level of a hearing-impaired person.

Claim 7 (currently amended): ~~The~~ A method ~~as in claim 1, wherein~~ for determining a minimum threshold value (O_{min}) ~~is established~~ serving to limit an output signal of a

processing unit into which an input signal has been fed, characterized in that a level of the input signal is determined and that the threshold value (O_{min}) is controlled as a function of the level of the input signal.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The method as in claim 7, characterized in that the minimum threshold value (O_{min}) is so selected as to be equal to an output level that results from an input level of about 80 dB and the corresponding amplification at that input level that is produced for a hearing-impaired person.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The method as in claim 3, wherein the differential amount (TR_{max}) is adjusted along a compression ratio for a hearing-impaired person.

Claim 10 (original): Application of the method per one of the claims 1 to 9 for operating a hearing aid.

Claim 11 (previously presented): Application of the method per claim 6 for operation of a hearing aid by a hearing-impaired person.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A system for implementing ~~the method per claim 1~~ a method for determining a threshold value (O_{max}, O_{min}, O_{TR}) serving to

limit an output signal of a processing unit into which an input signal has been fed, wherein a level of the input signal is determined and that the threshold value (O_{max}, O_{min}, O_{TR}) is controlled as a function of the level of the input signal, the threshold value (O_{max}, O_{min}, O_{TR}) being controlled independently of the output signal, characterized in that a processing unit is provided which receives an input signal and which permits within the processing unit the determination of a threshold value (O_{max}, O_{min}, O_{TR}) for the purpose of limiting the output signal, said threshold value (O_{max}, O_{min}, O_{TR}) being adjustable as a function of the level of the input signal.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The system as in claim 12, wherein from the level of the input signal a mean level (I) can be determined by averaging.

Claim 14 (currently amended): The system as in claim 13 ~~claim13~~, wherein the threshold value (O_{TR}) can be adjusted to a point which by a differential amount (TR_{max}) is above the mean level (I) of the input signal.

Claim 15 (previously presented): The system as in claim 14, wherein the mean level (I) can be derived from the input signal s(t) by employing the following formula:

$$I = \frac{1}{T} \times \int_{o}^{T} |s(t)| \times dt$$

where an averaging function can be performed over a time interval T.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The system as in claim 12, wherein it permits a maximum threshold value (O_{max}) to be established.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The system as in claim 16, wherein the maximum threshold value (O_{max}) can be selected to be equal to an upper comfort level of a hearing-impaired person.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The system as in claim 12, wherein it permits a minimum threshold value (O_{min}) to be established.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The system as in claim 18, wherein the minimum threshold value (O_{min}) can be selected to be equal to a mean amplification value for a hearing-impaired person.

Claim 20 (previously presented): The system as in claim 13, wherein the differential amount (TR_{max}) can be adjusted corresponding to a compression ratio for a hearing-impaired person.